



STATE OF NEVADA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES DIVISION

Administrative Office
3416 Goni Road, D-132
Carson City, NV 89706

(775) 687-4210 • Fax (775) 687-0574
adsd@adsd.nv.gov

ROMAINE GILLILAND
Director

JANE GRUNER
Administrator

BRIAN SANDOVAL
Governor

MINUTES

Name of Organization: Nevada Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)

Date and Time of Meeting: November 13, 2014
11:00 a.m.

This meeting was Video Conference between the following:

Reno: Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living
999 Pyramid Way
Sparks, NV 89431
(775) 353-3599

Las Vegas: Nevada Disability Advocacy and Law Center
2820 W. Charleston Blvd., Suite 11
Las Vegas, NV 89102
(702) 257-8150

To join this meeting by phone, dial 1-888-251-2909 then enter the Access Code 8985078 when prompted to.

Minutes

I. Welcome, Roll Call and Introductions
Lisa Bonie, Chairperson

Ms. Bonie was not able to attend, Mr. Bennett acted as chairperson in her absence.

A quorum being present, Mr. Bennett called the meeting to order at 11:06 a.m.

Members Present: Reggie Bennett, Kacy Curry, Melaine Mason, Rade Zone.

Excused Members: Lisa Bonie

Public Present: Laura Dickey, Nevada Disability Advocacy and Law Center; Bob Donnelly, CARE Chest; Mary Evilsizer, Southern Nevada Center for Independent Living (SNCIL) ; Anita Frantz, Nevada Disability Advocacy and Law Center; Shelley Hendren, Administrator, Rehabilitation Division, Nevada Department of Education, Training and Rehabilitation; Samantha King, Nevada PEP; Jack Mayes, Nevada Disability Advocacy and Law Center

Aging and Disability Services Division Staff Present: Tina Gerber-Winn, Vicki Kemp, Diane Scully, Laura Valentine

- II. Public Comment (No action may be taken upon a matter raised under public comment period unless the matter itself has been specifically included on an agenda as an action item.)

Mr. Mayes wanted to let everyone know the Nevada Disability Advocacy Law Center offices in Reno and Las Vegas have relocated. An open house will be held at all their locations – Reno, Elko, Las Vegas – on December 5, 2014 from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

- III. Approval of the Minutes from the October 2, 2014 Meeting (For Possible Action)
Reggie Bennett, Acting Chairperson

Ms. Mason did not think Ms. Merrill attended the October 2 meeting. Ms. Scully said she will check into it and make the necessary correction.

Ms. Curry made a motion to accept the minutes as written with the one noted correction. Mr. Zone seconded. Motion carried.

- IV. Report on the IL-NET Leading Statewide Strategic Planning Webinar Session
Held on October 7, 2014
Lisa Bonie, Chairperson

Ms. Kemp said it is a great tool with lots of information on strategic planning, but added that she and Ms. Bonie had discussed strategic planning for the SILC, but decided it should wait until there are more members on the council.

Ms. Mason suggested the Power Point from the session be distributed to the SILC members. Ms. Scully will try to obtain a copy of it and send it to the members.

Ms. Mason said it touched briefly on the reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), that it impacts the SILC, Part B funds, CIL's, the State Plan, the relationship with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), and more. Ms. Gerber-Winn suggested, and Ms. Mason agreed, a presentation should be made at a meeting on the impacts, especially relating to the SILC. The new regulations went into effect on October 1, 2014. Ms. Kemp said she has been reading the document and anticipates a lot of questions and who will be addressing them. Ms. Mason said the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) will provide guidance on changes in laws. Ms. Mason added that the

National Council on Independent Living (NCIL) has resources relating to what can be done now, and what regulations will be forthcoming. She noted the Older Blind program will be staying with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), but Independent Living (IL) will be going to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

Mr. Mayes asked if it impacts who the Designated State Unit (DSU) is. Ms. Mason said it's up to the State to decide, and Part B funds can flow through them and be dealt with at a State level, not administrators. Mr. Mayes asked if the SILC needs to be concerned about this. Ms. Mason responded that Ms. Hendren will be talking to Jane Gruner, Administrator, ADSD, about this. Ms. Hendren noted the SILC may want to weigh in on this topic. Mr. Donnelly asked if it means the IL program will no longer be part of ADSD. Ms. Mason said it's up to the State to decide, but it doesn't necessarily mean it will be moved.

V. Report on Part B Funded Budget
Vicki Kemp, ADSD

There being nothing new to report at this time, Ms. Kemp said they expect to have more information by the next meeting.

VI. Presentation of Information Obtained at Class, "Expanding Housing Options for Persons with Disabilities: Housing Advocacy for CILs"
Laura Valentine, Chief, Disability Services

Ms. Valentine attended the month-long course through the IL-NET website and is still in the process of completing the coursework. She briefly went through the handouts (see attached), and expects to have more detailed information at the next meeting. What is important for community people to be aware of is there are housing initiatives and planning issues in every state, and the SILC needs to be involved in those processes and advocate for persons with disabilities. The Housing Division is willing to give a presentation or training on housing plans or the housing locator.

VII. Report on the Independent Living Program Monitor
Vicki Kemp, ADSD

Ms. Kemp said she and John Rosenlund, ADSD, are still working on the monitor report and should have information to present to the council at the next meeting. Ms. Mason added that the contractor, Cheri Abbott, just completed the 2013 report, and she is just starting to contact IL consumers for the 2014 report.

VIII. Presentation of Information Obtained at the Town Hall Meetings Discussing Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired
Jack Mayes, Executive Director, Nevada Disability Advocacy and Law Center

Mr. Mayes introduced Laura Dickey also from the Disability Advocacy and Law Center. Mr. Mayes started by explaining there were two sessions in Elko, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The morning session was well attended with standing room only, but the afternoon session only had a few people. It was the same in Sparks. They had three sessions in Las Vegas, two were in-person meetings and one was a call-in session.

The scenario was, if the State had \$500,000 for blind services, how would you like to see it used? The top three answers were the same in each location, although within those topics there were different issues:

1. Transportation – with issues differing depending on being in a rural or metropolitan area.
2. Orientation mobility – except in Las Vegas with the Blind Center and the National Federation of the Blind, there is nothing for people ages 22-55 who are newly blind.
3. Access to and training on new technologies – most people have to figure it out on their own.

Ms. Dickey noted issues not included in the handout (see attached): whether students can take their assistive technology (AT) devices with them when they leave high school (some districts allow it, others don't); people feel at risk when using streets and sidewalks, need to improve access, safety and white cane promotion, and on trash collection day, trash cans are in the way; para-transit services need to coordinate between cities and counties; lack of awareness of services available and how to access them (support groups, partnerships with other groups, use of newsletters); general lack of services especially in rural areas. There was good representation from the blind, various agencies, parents and family members, and advocates.

Mr. Mayes said from here the report will be shared with the Legislature. He noted Mo Dennis was the lead on this, but with the recent election he is no longer Senate Majority Leader, so it's uncertain if it will move forward or who will take it up. If the Legislature chooses not to fund this, the SILC should look at making it one of their priorities going forward.

Ms. Gerber-Winn asked how these concerns relate to the centers for independent living (CILs) and what they offer and have funds for. Ms. Evilsizer said the CILs are required to provide core services for all disabilities, including the blind, but nothing specific to a particular disability. The core services are: basic independent living skills training (they don't have staff or the expertise to provide specialized training); information and referrals; advocacy; peer counseling; transition from nursing home to community. Ms. Gerber-Winn said they need more specialization to have the CILs offer additional services. Mr. Mayes added it does fit in with the mission of the CILs, but like so many other programs, they are asked to do so much with so little. He suggested the possibility of using the blind services funding to pay for a blind services specialist in the north and south.

Ms. Kemp asked if the CILs put information such as an annual report on their website, other ADSD council have requested information on services offered and number of consumers served. Ms. Evilsizer said the RSA and the CILs have that information. She added that each CIL may provide additional services that would be tracked in a different report and to contact her for the SNCIL and Ms. Bonie for Northern Nevada, to ask for that. The RSA website is <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/rsa/index.html>. For information on IL programs: <https://rsa.ed.gov/programs.cfm?pc=il>

Mr. Mayes suggested this be brought up again as the 2015 Legislative Session gets underway.

Mr. Zone brought up safety concerns when traveling around Las Vegas. People wear dark clothing and it's hard to see them at night. He suggested they wear reflective vests or light colored clothes. Mr. Mayes said that's part of educating people who are newly blind. Mr. Bennett suggested reaching out to the Blind Center to help with this. Mr. Mayes said if funds are available they'd be happy to expand their services.

Ms. Mason wanted to explain that with VR funding there are specific guidelines on how it can be used. She said they do have mobility training, however, right now, it can only be done if the person is in a work training program or over 55 years old. They need to be in compliance with federal requirements, but could enter into a fee-for-service agreement. Mr. Donnelly asked if CARE Chest could do a fee-for-service with VR staff. Ms. Mason said yes, but a contract and fee structure would need to be developed, along appropriate scheduling of staff. Ms. Kemp said they need to look at AT for IL and if funds can be used that way.

IX. Discussion and Possible Assignment of Tasks, of Current and Amended Goals in the Current State Plan for Independent Living, Including Who is Responsible, How They Will be Accomplished and Time Frames for Completion (For Possible Action)

Lisa Bonie, Chairperson
Vicki Kemp, ADSD

Ms. Kemp referred to the two Quick Look handouts (see attached). She noted the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) was sent to the federal government this week. Going forward ADSD and the SILC need to work together to accomplish the goals in the SPIL.

Ms. Mason said since there are only five members it's insufficient to move forward on this. Need to focus on increasing membership first. She suggested a standing agenda item to discuss what efforts are being put forth to recruit new members.

Ms. Mason also recommended breaking down the goals even further, into smaller segments of what needs to be done. Also, indicate the responsible entity clearly

shows who should take on the goal and if the public can help. She said the goals need to be more structured, include resources if there are any, and what ADSD staff can support, and if the SILC can assist.

Mr. Bennett asked if members could be provided with information on what type of persons can be part of the SILC. Ms. Scully will send that to the members.

Ms. Mason said there's a lack of leadership, ADSD is looking to the Council and the Council is looking to ADSD. It needs to be determined what can be done now and what can be put aside until they get additional members. Ms. Scully noted the councils are to direct ADSD.

Ms. Gerber-Winn said a work plan should be developed for each goal and objective, some are spelled out in the narrative, but some are not. The way she's understanding the conversation, ADSD should offer suggestions to the Council, then the Council will decide what to do.

Ms. Mason said she's looking for a report from ADSD with more direction, then the Council can decide from there. More detail, not just ADSD or SILC, list an individual or if work groups should be formed.

Mr. Zone said he's a volunteer whereas other Council members are paid, it's part of their job, therefore he doesn't feel that he should be doing as much. He doesn't see the need for more members that those in a paid position should do more. Ms. Scully read from the bylaws where it states the Council provides guidance to state agencies, ADSD supports the Council. Mr. Zone said he doesn't feel he should tell ADSD what to do, it's ADSD's job.

Mr. Bennett said as council members they all volunteer their time, but he feels he has a role as a disabled person to provide input and would like to see all the members speak up more often to those who put these programs into play.

Ms. Gerber-Winn asked if they should look into the old SPIL or the amended one recently submitted since the amendment has not been approved by the federal government. Mr. Bennett said an action plan should be put together for the upcoming meetings. Ms. Mason said to go forward with the amended SPIL.

X. Public Comment (No action may be taken upon a matter raised under public comment period unless the matter itself has been specifically included on an agenda as an action item.)

Ms. Evilsizer said the CILs have the capacity to provide adaptive equipment for telecommunications purposes to the deaf and blind.

Ms. Mason suggested a standing agenda item to update the council during the upcoming legislative session. This would include what the SILC is doing to be active during the session, ensure they are a proactive voice and collaborate with ADSD as their budget is discussed. She added that ADSD should work with Ms.

Bonie on strategy for input at the 2015 Legislative Session. Mr. Bennett asked if a member of the Commission could make a presentation to the SILC on Legislative issues. Mr. Mayes volunteered to share legislative updates with the SILC, since Commission members are not always available. Ms. Gerber-Winn said the CSPD and the Commission on Aging (COA) both have Legislative Subcommittees, and Sally Ramm, Elder Rights Attorney with ADSD, acts as the agency's Legislative liaison, and can provide reports and updates. Ms. Scully was asked to send minutes from these subcommittees to the SILC members. Mr. Mayes said on October 15, 2014 the State Department released the requested budgets. Jon Sasser, a member of the CSPD, follows the session closely and sends out updates, most recently a link to the DHHS website with information on the 2016-17 budget requests, that link is:

<http://dhhs.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/dhhsnv.gov/content/About/DHHSBudgetHighlights.pdf>

- XI. Schedule Meeting Dates for 2015 – Proposed: January 8, March 12, May 14, July 9, September 10, November 12 (For Possible Action)
Reggie Bennett, Acting Chairperson

Since Ms. Bonie was unable to attend, the next meeting was scheduled for January 8, 2014 and any other dates will be determined at that meeting.

- XII. Adjournment (For Possible Action)
Reggie Bennett, Acting Chairperson

Mr. Bennett adjourned the meeting at 12:35 p.m.

NOTE: Items may be considered out of order. The public body may combine two or more agenda items for consideration. The public body may remove an item from the agenda or delay discussion relating to an item on the agenda at any time. The public body may place reasonable restrictions on the time, place, and manner of public comments but may not restrict comments based upon viewpoint

Current Independent Living Council Members

Lisa Bonie (Chairperson), Reggie Bennett, Kacy Curry, Melaine Mason, Rade Zone

NOTE: We are pleased to make reasonable accommodations for members of the public who have disabilities and wish to attend the meeting. If special arrangements for the meeting are necessary, please notify Diane Scully at (775) 687-0551 as soon as possible and at least five days in advance of the meeting. If you wish, you may email her at dmscully@adsd.nv.gov. Supporting materials for this meeting are available at: 3416 Goni Road, #D-132, Carson City, NV 89706 or by contacting Diane Scully at (775) 687-0551 or by email at dmscully@adsd.nv.gov.

Agenda Posted at the Following Locations:

1. Aging and Disability Services Division, Carson City Office, 3416 Goni Road, Suite D-132, Carson City, NV 89706
2. Aging and Disability Services Division, Las Vegas Office, 1860 East Sahara Avenue, Las Vegas, NV 89104
3. Aging and Disability Services Division, Reno Office, 445 Apple Street, Suite 104, Reno, NV 89502
4. Aging and Disability Services Division, Elko Office, 1010 Ruby Vista Drive, Suite 104 Elko, NV 89801
5. Southern Nevada Center for Independent Living, 2950 S. Rainbow Blvd, #220, N. Las Vegas Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89146
6. Disability Resources, 50 Greg St Suite 102, Sparks, NV 89431
7. Nevada State Library and Archives, 100 N. Stewart Street, Carson City, NV 89701
8. Desert Regional Center, 1391 So. Jones Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89146

9. Sierra Regional Center, 605 South 21st St., Reno, NV 89431
10. Nevada Disability Advocacy & Law Center, 1865 Plumas St #2, Reno, NV 89509
11. Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living, 999 Pyramid Way, Sparks, NV 89431
12. NV Community Enrichment Programs, 2820 W. Charleston Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89146
13. Department of Health and Human Services, 4126 Technology Way, Carson City, NV 89706
14. Washoe ARC, 790 Sutro, Reno, NV 89512
15. Rehabilitation Division, 1370 S. Curry St., Carson City, NV 89703
16. Vocational Rehabilitation Job Connect, 1325 Corporate Blvd., Reno, NV 89502

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Expanding Housing Options for Persons with Disabilities: *Housing Advocacy for CILs*

COURSE SYLLABUS

Prepared by:

Ann Denton and Darrell Lynn Jones

October 6 – 24, 2014

IL-NET

CIL-NET · SILC-NET

**A Publication of CIL-NET, a Part of the IL-NET
National Training and Technical Assistance Project**

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Independent Living Research Utilization
1333 Moursund Street
Houston, TX 77030
713.520.0232 (V/TTY)
713.520.5785 (Fax)
<http://www.ilru.org>

ILRU is a program of TIRR Memorial Hermann (The Institute for Rehabilitation and Research).

Program Director: Richard Petty
Editor: Darrell Lynn Jones
Publications Staff: Dawn Heinsohn, Sharon Finney, Carol Eubanks—ILRU; and Alma Burgess—USU

This online course is presented by the CIL-NET, a part of the IL-NET national training and technical assistance project for centers for independent living (CIL-NET) and statewide independent living councils (SILC-NET). The IL-NET is operated by the Independent Living Research Utilization (ILRU) Program at TIRR Memorial Hermann in partnership with the National Council on Independent Living (NCIL) and the Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL). Online course implementation is facilitated by the Center for Persons with Disabilities, Utah State University.

Support for development of this publication was provided by the U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration under grant numbers H132B070002 and H132B120001. No official endorsement of the Department of Education should be inferred. Permission is granted for duplication of any portion of this manual, providing that the following credit is given to the project: ***Developed as part of the CIL-NET, a program of the IL-NET, an ILRU/NCIL/APRIL National Training and Technical Assistance Project.***

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Important Contact Information

Technical Support & Support for Screen Reader Users

Alma J. Burgess
Center for Persons with Disabilities
6880 Old Main Hill
Utah State University
Logan, Utah 84322
435.797.0253 (v)
435.797.1981 (TDD/TTY)
alma.burgess@usu.edu

Jeff Sheen
Center for Persons with Disabilities
6880 Old Main Hill
Utah State University
Logan, Utah 84322
435.797.8113 (v)
435.797.1981 (TDD/TTY)
jeff.sheen@usu.edu

Please contact Alma or Jeff if you are having technical problems.

Instructor

Ann Denton
9727 FM 1826, Unit 18
Austin, TX 78737
adenton@ahpnet.com

If you have questions about the specific course content contact the instructors.

Registration/Coordination

Dawn Heinsohn
ILRU
1333 Moursund Street
Houston, TX 77030
713.797-7130; 713.520.5785 Fax
Heinsohn@ilru.org

If you have questions about course registration, payment issues, or receiving course material in an alternate format, please contact Dawn Heinsohn.

IL-NET Online Courses – How They Work

“Going to class” online is easy! Here’s how it works.

1. Attend the course orientation telephone conference the week before your class starts.
2. You will receive an email from Instructure Canvas (notifications@instructure.com), if you don’t receive the email make sure to check your spam or junk email folders, if you can’t find the email please contact one of the technical support staff. It is an email inviting you to participate in the online class; if this is your first online class in Canvas you’ll need to register with Canvas before you can participate in the class. Click on the link provided in the email from Instructure Canvas to register with Canvas. Once you register with Canvas it will take you to the log-in page. The Web address is <http://elearn.usu.edu/canvas/> for the course log-in page. If you have already taken a class and registered with Canvas just click on the link in the email to accept the invitation and then you will be able to log-in using your email address and the password you created. If you forgot your password, click on the “Forgot Password?” link on the Canvas log-in page.
3. If you have trouble logging in contact us before the orientation call by using one of the numbers listed on the Important Contact Information sheet. If you cannot attend the orientation and need individual assistance please contact one of the course technical assistants before the course starts. An agenda of the topics to be covered during the orientation call is attached. Please login to the Canvas course prior to joining the teleconference, that way everyone will be ready to be oriented to the course.
4. Once you have attended the orientation call, log-in to the course homepage and download a copy of the manual.
5. Complete the pre-course survey before completing any of the assignments or reading anything on the discussion board.
6. Read the daily assignments that are included in the course manual. Answer the questions in the course manual. You may choose to write down your answers for yourself. Later, you will post answers to questions posted on the course discussion board for the instructor and classmates to read and comment on.
7. If applicable listen to any audio files or watch any video files associated with the assignments (Please note: Not all courses have audio or video files. If a course uses audio or video files the orientation call will include a section on how to use them).
8. Log on to the course website. Try to do this each day. Although an online course does not require students to be at their computers at a specific time

each day, in order to get the most out of an online course it is important to check in daily if at all possible. The flexibility of an online course allows you to log in any time of the day or night, but if you skip a few days at a time you can quickly start to get behind the discussions that are occurring on the course discussion board.

9. Go to the discussion board for the class you're taking. Read the daily assignment that the instructor has posted in a message for that day. (This assignment will generally be the same as the assignment for the day that is listed in the manual, however, based on course discussion instructors sometimes add to the assignments in the manual. Always check the assignments posted by the instructor). Each session is clearly labeled with its topic and day. Write a message with your response to the assignment.
10. While you're at the discussion board, read the posts of your classmates. Ask questions about what they've posted. If you disagree with a point someone has made, challenge them—gently and respectfully. Open and honest discussion helps everyone grow and learn.
11. Complete any additional assignments the instructor makes. Usually, there will be at least one written assignment that you will submit directly to the instructor instead of posting on the discussion board. This allows the instructor to give personal and private feedback on the assignment. However, depending on the instructor you may be asked to either post the assignment in a discussion board message, or attach it as a word processor file to an email sent directly to the instructor. Follow the directions of the instructor for how to submit these additional assignments.
12. At the end of the course, PLEASE complete the satisfaction and the post-course surveys. Your feedback is very important in helping us improve future courses.

Remember: If you have any trouble at all with accessing the online course, the manual, the discussion board, or any other aspect of the online course please contact one of the technical assistants as soon as possible. The sooner you let them know you are having a problem the quicker they can help solve it and prevent you from getting behind. The telephone numbers and email addresses for the two technical assistants are included in the Important Contact Information sheet in the syllabus. If you email the technical assistants please send the message to both to be sure you get the quickest possible response.*

* If you have questions about the specific course content contact the instructor. His or her name will be in the manual along with a phone number and e-mail address. The instructor is there to help you!

Course Description and Overview

Instructor

Ann V. Denton

Ann V. Denton is an expert on effective systems and interventions for persons with mental illness, substance abuse, and co-occurring disorders. She has knowledge and experience with system change, evidence-based practices, homelessness and housing issues for people with mental illness and other disabilities. Ms. Denton conducts monitoring site visits for SAMHSA programs, including CSAT and CMHS projects and played a leadership role in the development of SAMHSA's Permanent Supportive Housing Toolkit. Ms. Denton develops training products, leads training teams and provides training and technical assistance to states and communities in many areas, including housing development, funding and implementation of evidence-based practices, permanent supportive housing, services and supports for people with disabilities, and access to mainstream services.

As Director of Substance Abuse and Homeless Services in Travis County, TX, Ms. Denton was responsible for the administration of both residential and outpatient treatment including specialized treatment for individuals with co-occurring disorders; methadone maintenance; counseling and access to housing for people who are HIV+; outreach and engagement services for people who are homeless; a Safe Haven; and intensive outpatient treatment programs.

Course Objectives and Description

After completing this course, participants will be able to:

- identify and match major sources of federal or state funding for housing to consumer needs
- implement effective advocacy strategies to expand housing resources for people with disabilities
- play a significant role in their community's housing planning processes
- forge alliances with key housing partners

This three-week distance learning course is targeted to staff at Centers for Independent Living working as administrators, housing specialists, advocates, and others concerned with increasing the availability of integrated, affordable, accessible housing for persons with disabilities. A "hands on" course, *Expanding Housing Options for Persons with Disabilities: Housing Advocacy for CILs*, takes an in-depth look at funding sources, housing systems, the community housing planning process, and strategies to make these work better to meet consumer needs. Participants will leave the course with knowledge of the housing resources IN THEIR COMMUNITY, including who the key players are and how to get involved.

Course Materials

The course utilizes four resources for participant study, activities, and discussion: (a) this syllabus, (b) sections from two training manuals, (c) supplemental materials, and (d) the Internet. The manuals are designed to provide sufficient background information to make it possible for all students to assume an active role in on-line discussions. Additional learning materials may be recommended, but not required, to enhance the participant's understanding of the topic. The syllabus contains the plan and the assignments for each session.

The instructors will be visiting the website daily during the course of this training. Please use the central discussion area as much as possible so others in the training may benefit from your questions and observations. If you need to talk to the instructors privately, use the e-mail message system.

Online Course Expectations and Guidelines

Here are some expectations and guidelines that will assist you in effective participation and successful completion of the course.

Flexibility and Discipline

Participants can log on to the course website any hour of the day or night, taking part at times that best fit their schedules. While this "anytime, anywhere" flexibility is convenient, it requires greater than average discipline and does not allow a participant to "coast." There are many deadlines that must be met each week in order to maximize learning and interaction. You are encouraged to post your comments daily as a benefit to both you and your colleagues. This interaction is a major part of the course and is one of the ways that online courses differ from self-study courses. Students are expected to participate in each assignment in order to receive a certificate of completion.

A nice feature of online courses is that you can re-read and review course material or instructor and participant comments as often as you like. You will be able to evaluate course material at your own pace and then respond in a thoughtful and constructive manner. Participants have a greater responsibility for their own learning than they would have in a traditional learning environment.

Communication and Learning

Online courses work best when classes have 15 or more participants, and they are most effective when there is lively class "discussion." Participants, therefore, are expected to take initiative in communication and interaction. Within the unique on-line environment, the responsibility is on the participant to maintain an open communication link, request clarification, and direct interaction in a way that will serve to increase his or her personal understanding. Even though face-to-face communication is absent, the written discussion of online classes creates entirely new ways of learning—sometimes just different, sometimes even better.

Participants contribute as much to the learning environment as the instructor, whose role becomes one of a colleague and facilitator rather than the director and sole source of knowledge.

On-line programs have been specifically designed to take advantage of technology. We have not attempted to replicate a model that works well in a face-to-face traditional environment. The online delivery method gives you the same results—but in a far more efficient manner. Also remember that in physical classrooms, some participants sit without participating. In the on-line environment, it's a little harder to remain uninvolved.

Time Needed

Plan to devote an average of one hour per day to your assignments and activities which include accessing lectures, participating in course discussion, completing and submitting assignments, and reading supplementary workshop materials. Once the course begins, you are encouraged to log on every day.

About the Speed of This Workshop

This three-week workshop moves along surprisingly quickly. We have found that students who devote time every day to the course get the most out of it. Those who fall behind may not receive feedback from the instructor and their peers because the class has moved on to other assignments. If you do fall behind, you should complete the assignments, but be aware that you may not get the same quality of feedback.

IL-Related Assignments

Discussion at your own organization or work site will enhance the learning experience. Participants are encouraged, but not required, to consult with coworkers prior to completing the assignments.

Participant Achievement Documentation

A certificate is available from ILRU for those students who log in to class regularly, keep current with assigned readings, complete assignments, participate in the discussions, complete the surveys, and complete the final assignment on time.

Follow-up Survey and Evaluation Summary

An evaluator may contact you to complete a brief survey designed to assess if you are applying what you learned in this course to the work that you do. The results of this survey will be used to assess the longer term outcomes of the training.

Course Calendar

October 6	SESSION 1: Introductions, Pre-Course Survey, Educate Yourself on Programs
October 7	SESSION 2: Overview of Housing Resources – Jigsaw Puzzle Pieces
October 8	SESSION 3: Overview of Housing Resources – HOME and Tax Credits
October 9	SESSION 4: Understanding Vouchers
October 10	SESSION 5: Working with the Public Housing Authorities
October 13	SESSION 6: Understanding Tax Credits
October 14	SESSION 7: Working with Tax Credits
October 15	SESSION 8: Your Community's Consolidated Plan Programs
October 16	SESSION 9: Making the Case – Why Resources Should Be Allocated to People with Disabilities
October 17	SESSION 10: Advocacy and Collaboration Strategies – Poverty Argument
October 20	SESSION 11: Advocacy and Collaboration Strategies – Legal Argument
October 21	SESSION 12: Advocacy Strategies – Presenting Your Message
October 22	SESSION 13: Additional Resources
October 23	SESSION 14: Action Plan for Housing – Review What You Know
October 24	SESSION 15: Continuing your Action Plan for Housing & Course Wrap Up

Course Assignments

Session One: Introductions, Pre-Course Survey, Educate Yourself on Programs

Plan for Session One

- Review course structure and requirements.
- Share information about yourself.
- Meet course participants.
- Take the pre-course survey.
- Learn about who controls the money and programs in your state and city.

Assignment

1. Take the pre-course survey by clicking on Quizzes on the left side in Canvas.
2. Read the course syllabus and overview at the beginning of this document and then pages 5-9 in *Choose, Get, Keep Integrated Community Housing*.
3. Tell us a little about yourself in the "Discussion" area of the course website and then read your colleagues' biographical postings.
4. Using the Internet and/or telephone contact your local community development or housing office and request a copy of your community's Consolidated Plan. You may need to pick it up, have it mailed to you, or download it to your computer. This will be used for several assignments during the class.
5. Review "Summary of Housing Resources Table."
6. Answer the Study Questions below.

Study Questions

1. Which if any of the funding sources listed in the table have you heard of?
2. Are you aware of organizations in your community that use these funds? If so, what kinds of services do they provide with the funds?

Session Two: Overview of Housing Resources – Jigsaw Puzzle Pieces

Plan for Session Two

- Understand how the housing industry approaches affordability.
- Obtain detailed information about housing resources, including sources and how the resources are used.

Assignment

1. Read pages 10 – 14 in *Choose, Get, Keep Integrated Community Housing*.
2. Read slides 4 – 18 in *Expanding the Availability of Accessible Housing* PowerPoint.
3. Read pages 36 - 41 in *Choose, Get, Keep Integrated Community Housing*.
4. Complete the study question activities.

Study Questions

1. Look up the Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) in your community. Try http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/pha/contacts
Call the PHA and find out if there is a waiting list.
2. Using the telephone, networking, and/or the Internet see if you can find any non-profit housing developers in your community. These include Community Development Corporations (CDCs) and Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs).
3. Post your findings on the course site.

Session Three: Overview of Housing Resources – HOME and Tax Credits

Plan for Session Three

- Gain an understanding of the HOME Investment Partnerships Program and the Low Income Housing Tax Credits Program.

Assignment

1. Read pages 40 – 44 (HOME) and 13 – 22 (LIHTC) in *Funding Sources Successfully Used by States to Support Development of Integrated, Affordable, and Accessible Community Housing*.
2. Answer the study questions.
3. Obtain a copy or link to your community's Consolidated Plan.
4. Obtain a copy or link to your state's Qualified Allocation Plan.

Study Questions

1. How can the Qualified Allocation Plan be used to help target housing resources to persons with disabilities?
2. Name an allowable activity under HOME that is both underutilized and allows quick access to housing.

Session Four: Understanding Vouchers

Plan for Session Four

- Learn how vouchers work and how to access them.
- Identify who is eligible for vouchers.

Assignment

3. Read:
 - Part I, Housing Choice Vouchers (pages 4 – 12) in *Funding Sources Successfully Used by States to Support Development of Integrated, Affordable, and Accessible Community Housing*, and
 - Appendix A in *Choose, Get, Keep Integrated Community Housing*.
4. Review “Legal Issues” PowerPoint, slides 21 – 43.
5. Answer the Study Questions.

Study Questions

1. Name two sources of housing vouchers (you may have to look back to Session 2 PowerPoints).
2. Describe a situation in which you would ask for a reasonable accommodation for a person applying to the Housing Choice Voucher program.

Session Five: Working with the Public Housing Authorities

Plan for Session Five

- Become familiar with Public Housing Authority plans.
- Learn about how the information in these plans can help you understand and gain access to these resources.

Assignment

1. Go to <http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/pha/index.cfm>. This is HUD's site for PHA plans. Click on “approved plans.” Find the approved PHA plan for Hay Springs, Nebraska for Fiscal Year Beginning (FYB) 2009 (dated October, 2008).
2. Answer the study questions.

Study Questions

1. Answer these questions about the Hay Springs PHA plan: how many households could be served in the coming fiscal year? How many in public housing? How many in the Housing Choice Voucher (formerly known as Section 8) program?
2. Does this PHA's plan set aside units for people with disabilities?
3. Looking at the section titled "Supporting Documents Available for Review," name two that might be of particular interest to persons with disabilities.
4. Bonus question: In the supporting documents section, why doesn't this PHA have a Section 8 (HCV) grievance procedure?
5. Using the skills you have learned here, look up a housing authority serving your community and answer the same questions.

Session Six: Understanding Tax Credits

Plan for Session Six

- Learn how tax credits work and how to access them.
- Identify who is eligible for tax credits.

Assignment

1. Read Slides 1-19 in *Using Tax Credits to Expand Housing for People with Disabilities* PowerPoint.
2. Locate your Housing Finance Agency; find the Qualified Allocation Plan for Low Income Housing Tax Credits. Obtain a copy of the plan through the Internet or by picking one up.
3. Answer the Study Questions.

Study Questions

1. Are people with disabilities included in the Qualified Allocation Plan?
2. Is accessibility or Universal Design included in your state plan? Does your state provide points for projects that set aside units for persons with disabilities?

Session Seven: Working with Tax Credits

Plan for Session Seven

- Become more familiar with Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) Properties.
- Consider examples from other states.
- Learn what to ask for.

Assignment

1. Read Slides 20-51 in the *Using Tax Credits to Expand Housing for People with Disabilities* PowerPoint.
2. Call or visit the website for the State Housing Finance Agency for your state. Using the telephone or Internet, make contact to find out if they keep a list of projects that were awarded Low Income Housing Tax Credits.
3. Identify up to three tax credit properties in your community; call the property and collect eligibility information from the management office. This includes whether it is an elderly or family project, income levels needed to qualify, and rent for an average unit
4. Answer the Study Questions.

Study Questions

1. What were the rents at the LIHTC properties? Are they affordable to someone who lives on SSI and/or SSDI?
2. What ideas do you have for making the LIHTC program in your state more usable for persons with disabilities?

Session Eight: Your Community's Consolidated Plan Programs

Plan for Session Eight

- Become familiar with HOME Investments Partnership Program, Community Development Block Grants, the Supportive Housing Program, Emergency Shelter Grants, and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS.

Assignment

1. Read slides 19 - 32 in the *Housing Funding Options* PowerPoint.
2. Answer the Study Questions.

Study Questions

1. Using the ConPlan you obtained earlier, explain how your community plans to spend money in these programs.
2. Are there provisions for people with disabilities in your community's Consolidated Plan? What are they?
3. Given what you know about the needs in your community, name three requests you can make of decision makers that would make housing more available for people with disabilities.

Session Nine: Making the Case – Why Resources Should Be Allocated to People with Disabilities

Plan for Session Nine

- Learn about poverty and the lack of affordable housing.
- Find data about your housing market.

Assignment

1. Review *Priced Out in 2012* (Technical Assistance Collaborative – <http://www.tacinc.org/media/33368/PricedOut2012.pdf>)
2. Write a paragraph describing how easy or hard it would be for a person on an SSI income to afford a one-bedroom apartment in your community. Post it.
3. Answer the Study Questions.

Study Questions

1. How is HUD's Extremely Low Income (ELI) category defined?
2. How many communities in the U.S. have one-bedroom fair market rents that EXCEED an SSI income?

Session Ten: Advocacy and Collaboration Strategies – Poverty Argument

Plan for Session Ten

- Gain an understanding of advocacy and collaboration strategies.
- Learn how to make the "poverty" argument.

Assignment

1. Review slides 20 -25 in *Expanding the Availability of Accessible Housing* PowerPoint.
2. Answer the Study Questions.

Study Questions

1. True or false – "Designating funds to low income households is the same as targeting households at or below the poverty level." Explain.
2. Using the poverty argument, write a paragraph advocating for a set aside of resources for people with disabilities in your community's ConPlan.

Session Eleven: Advocacy and Collaboration Strategies – Legal Argument

Plan for Session Eleven

- Learn how to make the legal argument.

Assignment

1. Look at slides 27-37 “Collaboration Strategies” in the *Expanding the Availability of Accessible Housing* PowerPoint.
2. Answer the Study Questions.

Study Questions

1. Thinking about the work that your organization does, how do housing laws (Fair Housing, ADA, Section 504) inform, expand or protect your mission?
2. Write a paragraph making the legal case for allocating housing resources to people with disabilities. Post it.

Session Twelve: Advocacy – Presenting your Message

Plan for Session Twelve

- Learn how to use the information you have to assess needs.
- Identify where to look for information.
- Understand how to present your “wants” in a way that helps policy makers and program directors meet their goals.

Assignment

1. Review *A Fair Share: Making the Case to Decision Makers* document and the paragraphs you wrote in Sessions Ten and Eleven.
2. Develop sample testimony making three key points including the need for housing and targeting specific resources. E-mail your work to the instructor.
3. Answer the Study Question.

Study Question

- How many people with disabilities have need for affordable housing in your community? (How many people with disabilities are on SSI in your community? How many people are enrolled in waivers? Are on waiting lists? Are on the local PHA lists (if they keep a separate list)? Etc.)

Session Thirteen: Additional Resources

Plan for Session Thirteen

- Learn about the Technical Assistance Collaborative, Consortium of Citizens with Disabilities, National Low Income Housing Coalition, and other resources for public policy and affordable housing.

Assignment

1. Using the Internet, go to the websites for Technical Assistance Collaborative and National Low Income Housing Coalition.
2. On the TAC website, locate information about vouchers for “non-elderly people with disabilities.” What is this? Write and post a short paragraph.
3. On the NLIHC website, locate the “Advocates Guide” and review the Table of Contents. How can you use this resource?

Session Fourteen: Action Plan for Housing – Review What You Know

Plan for Session Fourteen

- Review what you know.
- Articulate what you want.
- Identify resources.
- Determine how you will make your case.

Assignment

1. Begin developing a housing plan for your community, using the Planning Template provided as a sample.
2. Make a list of what you want for your community.
3. Match each item on the list to a specific housing resource.
4. Brainstorm ideas for how to make an effective case to get what you want.

Session Fifteen: Continuing your Action Plan for Housing and Course Wrap Up

Plan for Session Fifteen

- Review your coursework.
- Make a timeline.
- Consider your next steps.
- Complete the post-course and satisfaction surveys.

Assignment

1. Take the post-course and satisfaction surveys by clicking on Quizzes on the left side in Canvas.
2. Continue developing your housing plan.
3. Make a timeline that shows when and where you can advocate for your community "wants." Add any additional steps, like gathering more information or meeting with stakeholders, to the timeline.
4. Go back to your sample testimony from Session Twelve and revise it with your new knowledge.
5. Identify three immediate next steps you will take to make the dream of housing real for persons with disabilities.
6. Answer the Study Questions.

Study Questions

1. Review your coursework. What has been most relevant? Most useful?
2. Did you find any of the discussion to be NOT useful?

Item VI (table)

Table: Summary of Housing Resources

	Funded by	Funding allocated by	Types of activities	Population served
Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8) http://www.hud.gov/offices/pin/programs/hcv/	HUD	Public Housing Agencies, according to PHA Plan	Primarily tenant-based rental assistance; also project-based rental assistance and home ownership	Families, individuals with disabilities, and older adults at or below 50 percent of AMI (75 percent must be reserved for those at or below 30 percent of AMI)
Rental Assistance for Non-Elderly Persons with Disabilities [beginning late 2009]	HUD	Public Housing Agencies, according to PHA Plan	Tenant-based rental assistance	Up to 3,000 vouchers for non-elderly adults with disabilities who are on PHA waiting lists; another 1,000 for individuals transitioning from institutions
Public Housing http://www.hud.gov/offices/pin/programs/ph/index.cfm	HUD	Public Housing Agencies, according to PHA Plan	PHA-owned and operated housing	Families, individuals with disabilities, and older adults at or below 80 percent of AMI
Home Investment Partnerships (HOME) http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpod/affordablehousing/programs/home/	HUD	According to local or State Consolidated Plan	Home purchase assistance; home rehabilitation assistance; housing development; tenant-based rental assistance for up to 2 years	Families at or below 80 percent of AMI, with certain percentages reserved for those below 60 and 50 percent of AMI

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)	HUD	According to local or State Consolidated Plan	Housing rehabilitation; Nonprofit housing development; code enforcement/demolition; building community centers, etc.	70 percent of funds must benefit low- and moderate-income households (at or below 50 percent of AMI)
http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/programs/				
Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)	HUD	According to local or State Consolidated Plan	Acquisition, construction, or rehabilitation; rental assistance; homelessness prevention; social services	People who have HIV/AIDS and are at or below 80 percent of AMI
http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/aidshousing/programs/				
Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP)	HUD	According to local or State Consolidated Plan	Rental assistance; utility deposits; household furnishings; back rent; hotels; etc.	People who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness
http://www.hudhre.info/HPRP/				
Supportive Housing Program (SHP)	HUD	According to local or State Continuum of Care	Acquisition, rehabilitation, new construction, leasing, supportive services, operating costs	People who are homeless, including those who have disabilities
http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/homeless/programs/shpl/				

Shelter Plus Care http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/homeless/programs/splusc/	HUD	According to local or State Continuum of Care	Tenant-based, project-based, and sponsor-based rental assistance	People who are homeless and have disabilities
Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/mfh/progdsc/disab811.cfm	HUD	HUD State offices	Interest-free loans for development, project-based rental assistance	Families at or below 50 percent of AMI with one or more adults with disabilities
Low Income Housing Tax Credits http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/affordablehousing/training/web/ihtc/basics/	Treasury	State housing finance agencies, according to Qualified Allocation Plan	Housing development	A percentage of units must be rent-restricted: either 20 percent of units for households at or below 50 percent of AMI or 40 percent of units for households at or below 60 percent of AMI
National Affordable Housing Trust Fund	HUD	[Authorized but not yet implemented]	Primarily for affordable rental housing	--
Section 515 http://www.rurdev.usda.g	U.S.D.A.	U.S. Department of Agriculture State Offices	Loans for multi-family housing development	Families, individuals with disabilities, and older adults at or below 80

ov/rhs/				percent of AMI
Section 521 http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rhs/	U.S.D.A.	U.S. Department of Agriculture State offices	Rental assistance	Families, individuals with disabilities, and older adults at or below 80 percent of AMI, with priority for those at or below 50 percent of AMI
Local and State Housing Trust Funds http://www.communitychange.org/our-projects/htf	States	Local and State housing finance agencies	Varies	The Center for Community Change reports that 38 States and 550 localities have established housing trust funds.



NEVADA'S PROTECTION & ADVOCACY SYSTEM FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Town Hall Meeting Summary Report 2014

**A Discussion of Services Needed by Individuals who are
Blind or Visually Impaired**

Since the last Nevada Legislative session, ongoing discussions have focused on how to determine and address the needs of individuals who are blind or visually impaired to help them maintain their independence in communities throughout our State. A Town Hall meeting strategy was developed and implemented in order to provide a forum in which individuals who are blind or visually impaired could voice their concerns. The focus of these Town Hall meetings was to determine what services and supports exist in communities as well as what service and support gaps occur for individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

Town Hall meetings were hosted in partnership with the State of Nevada Aging & Disability Services Division; the State of Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation; the Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living; and NDALC. Town Hall meetings were held throughout Nevada in order to learn about residents' concerns living in urban as well as rural Nevada. Elko was the first community to host Town Hall meetings on August 21. Town Hall meetings were subsequently held in Sparks on September 12, at the Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living. The final round of Town Hall meetings was held in Las Vegas at the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation on September 24, and at the American Legion on September 26. A Town Hall Meeting was hosted by conference call on October 8. Town Hall meetings were scheduled in the morning and in the afternoon in each venue to provide greater opportunity for individuals who are blind or visually impaired, their families, advocates, and friends; service providers; and all other interested community members to attend. Mr. Jack Mayes, Executive Director of the Nevada Disability Advocacy & Law Center (NDALC), facilitated all the Town Hall Meetings, except those held at the American Legion and the Nevada State Department of Employment and Training where a NDALC Rights Advocate facilitated the meetings.

The Town Hall partners created program flyers to inform consumers of the upcoming Town Hall meetings and conducted outreach to related consumer support groups and organizations. The Town Hall meetings held in Elko were attended by 34 consumers and agency representatives; 37 attended the Town Hall Meetings held in Sparks at the Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living, followed by two telephone interviews with consumers who were unable to attend these meetings; and another 30 attended the Town Hall meetings at the American Legion and the Nevada State Department of Employment, Training & Rehabilitation in Las Vegas. The Town Hall meeting held by conference call on October 8, had seven participants. Overall, a total of 108

attended the Town Hall meetings. Town Hall meeting attendees were invited to submit any additional comments to the NDALC by October 17, for inclusion in the NDALC Town Hall Meeting Summary Report 2014 (Summary Report).

Town Hall meetings were attended by representatives from federal, state and local agencies as well as from community-based organizations. Representatives from the public sector included: the Regional Representative from Senator Harry Reid's Northern Nevada Office; the State of Nevada, Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation, the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, Administrative Division; the Bureaus of Services to the Blind and Visually Impaired and Vocational Rehabilitation; the Aging and Disability Services Division; and the Aging and Disability Resource Center program; and representatives from the school districts of Carson City, Clark County, and Elko County. Parents of children attending public schools participated across the State.

Numerous community-based organizations were represented: Blind Connect; Blind Veterans; Care Chest of Sierra Nevada; City Care City Transport (board member); Consumer Direct; Crisis Call Center; Easter Seals Nevada; Eye Clinic of Las Vegas; Gentiva; Goodwill Industries; Mobility Technology Workshop; More to Life; National Federation of the Blind; Nevada Council of the Blind; Nevada Early Intervention Services; Nevada PEP; Nevada Talk and Book; Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living; Southern Nevada Center for Independent Living; United Cerebral Palsy of Nevada; Wells Family Resource Center; and Vision Rahab Services.

This Summary Report reflects the key points shared by attendees at the Town Hall meeting convened in each geographic area, plus the follow-up personal interviews, by consumer service area (note: these services are not listed in any order of priority): Orientation and Mobility Training (O&M Training); Assistive Technology (AT); Transportation; Life Skills; Education; Employment; Consumer Service Outreach; and Miscellaneous Concerns. Key points were often voiced at more than one Town Hall meeting and, as a result, key points are often listed more than once. Rather than compress the interim report results, this Summary Report reflects where the key points were voiced to enable the reader to understand the scope of the shared concern throughout the State. Understandably, Town Hall meeting attendees focused more on some consumer services than others at different Town Hall meetings held throughout the State.

A review of the Summary Report indicates that there are five key areas of concern among individuals who are blind or visually impaired, their families, friends, advocates, and service providers.

- 1) A persistent lack of consumer awareness exists as to what services are available and how to access services when a need arises. This lack of consumer awareness was found to exist across all consumer service areas: O&M Training, AT, Transportation, Life Skills, Education, and Employment. Expanded Consumer Service Outreach is needed; however,

it will only be beneficial if outreach strategies are in accessible formats to the affected consumer groups.

- 2) The lack of O&M Training for the so-called “gap population”, ages 22 to 55 who are not pursuing a vocational outcome, inhibits a consumer’s ability to learn how to navigate their home and social environments. Rather than receive formal training they are left to learn these skills on their own or to rely on others to help manage their daily tasks. This hampers consumers’ ability to learn how to adapt to their new physical challenges; which, more often than not, impacts their long-term success to become independent. This issue is compounded by the fact that there is a lack of trained O&M Training professionals in Nevada, particularly in rural Nevada.
- 3) Even where consumers know which AT device would best meet their needs, many lack the financial resources to purchase the desired technology. To complicate matters, training is typically not included with the purchase of an AT device. And, even when the provision of AT devices is provided at no cost to a consumer, invariably the service provider does not have sufficient resources to fully train the consumer in the use and features of the AT device.

Students should be able to access AT devices to complete homework or other tasks away from the school site, plus they should be able to take their AT device with them when they transition from high school to work and/or post-secondary education. Such policies are not consistent across school districts in the State.

- 4) Paratransit service areas need to be expanded in order to better serve the transportation needs of consumers to enable them to lead fuller, productive lives. Paratransit systems should consider partnering with neighboring paratransit systems to develop a “seamless” system between jurisdictions.
- 5) Consumers feel “at-risk” as pedestrians on Nevada’s streets and sidewalks. Drivers seem to be unaware that they need to use additional caution when a pedestrian with a white cane is using a crosswalk; likewise, they feel a similar frustration when using our cities’ sidewalks.

In addition to this Summary Report, the NDALC prepared interim reports summarizing the key points from each Town Hall meeting convened. NDALC chose not to include these interim reports as part of this Summary Report because it is inclusive of the comments shared in the earlier interim reports. Should you want to review the interim reports, please contact Laura Dickey at laura@ndalc.org or 775.333.7878. For privacy considerations, the attendance rosters will not be provided.

ORIENTATION & MOBILITY TRAINING (O&M Training)

Nevada Disability Advocacy & Law Center, Elko, Nevada

- ❖ O&M Training is limited in the rural communities: Elko County School District and Bureau of Services to the Blind and Visually Impaired (BSBVI) rely upon Kevin Hull of Vision Rehab Services for such services. There is an expected loss of this service when Mr. Hull retires in 3-4 years. BSBVI does not have a position dedicated to O&M Training in the rural areas and cannot rely on services being provided by the Reno BSBVI office. Reno only has adequate staff coverage to serve the urban area; there is not enough staff to also serve the rural areas. Orientation and mobility educational programs are limited throughout the nation; it was estimated that the number of such programs is less than 12 nationally.
- ❖ Recommendation was made to afford individuals with disabilities the ability to go out of state to obtain the necessary O&M Training with funding through the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR) and/or to create an O&M Training program in Nevada. BSBVI needs to add a staff position in rural Nevada for an O&M Training specialist.
- ❖ Mobility issues were cited with curbs, stairs, and sidewalks.
- ❖ Depth perception issues create mobility challenges. Some individuals with depth perception issues expressed a need for training to learn how to safely access stairs, curbs, and basic mobility coordination. They have learned by doing rather than formal training.
- ❖ Home modifications – an older resident with a visual impairment was unaware of a home modification program available through BSBVI to assist with minor home alterations to accommodate individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

ORIENTATION & MOBILITY TRAINING

Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living, Sparks, Nevada

- ❖ Some individuals who are blind or visually impaired reported they taught themselves how to navigate their surroundings.
- ❖ Some individuals who were blind reported that they were discouraged from learning Braille; they viewed this as a major hindrance to their learning and development.
- ❖ Lack of vision instructors and transcribers; few vision professionals are available.
- ❖ Lack of awareness among some individuals who are blind or visually impaired about the range of services available.
- ❖ Services are available through BSBVI if there is an employment outcome; no services are available to those individuals who are blind or visually impaired when they are not seeking an employment outcome and fall between the ages of 22 and 55, the so-called “gap population”.
- ❖ Recommended that a priority should be established to provide funding for staff and services to those individuals who are blind or visually impaired who are not seeking employment and are between the ages of 22 and 55.

- ❖ BVR/BSBVI would like to see funding to provide services to the “gap population” between the ages of 22 and 55. It is unclear who the funding would be awarded to.
- ❖ The infrastructure of cities in urban and rural Nevada presents mobility barriers for those who are blind or visually impaired. If consumers were more vocal about their needs, it is felt that more jurisdictions would respond by providing accommodations to public rights of way by reducing or eliminating obstacles found in the paths of travel.
- ❖ A consumer who was blind commented at the Town Hall meeting in Sparks that she had to relocate from Pahrump to northern Nevada to reside with family because there were no services available in Pahrump to assist her with her blindness. She stressed the lack of services crossed all consumer service areas: transportation, orientation and mobility training, life skills training, and access to assistive technology and training to learn how to use assistive technology devices.

ORIENTATION & MOBILITY TRAINING

American Legion, Nevada State Department of Employment, Training & Rehabilitation, and Clark County Conference Call, Town Hall Meetings, Las Vegas, Nevada

- ❖ Blind Connect reported that a consumer was unable to obtain O&M Training because he wasn't able to return to work; however, he was able to obtain assistance from the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) to learn how to use the bus service and to navigate the bus routes.
- ❖ O&M Training is available through BVR/BSBVI for only those individuals pursuing an employment objective; the so-called “gap population” is unable to receive the life skills services needed to learn how to live with blindness or a visual impairment.
- ❖ Funds should be made available to expand O&M and life skills training to the gap population.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Nevada Disability Advocacy & Law Center, Elko, Nevada

- ❖ BSBVI (Faith Wilson) and Kevin Hull complete in-home assessments for clients of the State BSBVI program.
- ❖ Funding for assistive technology is agency-based; if an individual is blind or visually impaired falls within the gap ages of 22 to 55 assistive technology cannot be funded through an agency unless the individual is actively pursuing employment; if the individual is over 55 services are available through BSBVI through the Older Blind program, which is focused on diverting institutionalization and fostering independence, not vocationally motivated.
- ❖ Uniformity between school districts is needed to provide assistive technology devices to students who are transitioning to work and/or post-secondary education.

- ❖ Recommendation was made to have AT devices available for students to take home to use with homework, on school breaks, or between semesters to maintain knowledge base. Most AT devices follow Elko students but each school district sets its own policies.
- ❖ BVR/BSBVI can partner with schools as long as there is a goal of employment.
- ❖ Recommendation was made to establish funding to ensure the continued provision of AT devices to assist students who do not apply to BVR/BSBVI in their transition to work and/or post-secondary education. (Note: BVR/BSBVI have funding for AT for clients transitioning from high school to higher education/employment). The student must be a BVR/BSBVI client.
- ❖ Low vision specialists are needed. Important to remember that while resources are limited in Elko County, they are even more limited outside of Elko in rural Nevada. Only one teacher is trained to instruct students who are blind or visually impaired for all of rural Nevada.
- ❖ Internet access is available only Monday through Friday.
- ❖ No one in the area is qualified to conduct evaluations for AT devices and train the individual with a disability in the use of the AT. When necessary, BVR/BSBVI must bring in professionals from other cities at greater expense and, often times, vendors are unwilling to travel to rural Nevada.
- ❖ Concerns about XP transition with the older population and the potential risk of identity theft if the user does not convert from XP to a supported operating system.
- ❖ Lack of services and service providers exists even with the phenomenal growth in rural Nevada. Funding for services has not kept pace with population growth.
- ❖ Lack of a solid technological infrastructure results in increased road miles to deliver services; “road time” is unproductive time.
- ❖ Some consumers expressed they did not need assistance with AT devices and/or training; two consumers disclosed they had late on-set blindness and another was a client at a work center (formerly known as “sheltered workshops”). (Note: this perspective was not shared by the majority of consumers who attended the Town Hall meetings.)

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living, Sparks, Nevada

- ❖ Funds are not available to stay current with the ever-changing technology, software, and operating systems.
- ❖ Likewise, funding is not available for training on how to use AT devices and programs. You can generally obtain equipment but then there are no funds – or limited funding – to train the consumer on how to operate equipment or use a specific program.
- ❖ IPads and notebooks are excellent resources for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Apps are available to assist individuals who are blind or visually impaired, including: point of sale, debit cards, money readers, color apps, etc. Many of these apps

are free or at a nominal cost. Consumers were encouraged to use smart technology devices to gain greater independence.

- ❖ IPads are viewed as AT devices by BVR and BSBVI.
- ❖ Greater outreach and training resources are needed to inform individuals who are blind or visually impaired of the varied resources available and how to use them.
- ❖ Resources should be restored to the so-called “gap population” – those ages 22 through 55 – to provide resources to assist them.
- ❖ The BSBVI refers individuals who are blind or visually impaired to Care Chest of Sierra Nevada (CCSN) for services in its independent living program should consumers fall within the so-called “gap group”. Consumers are referred to Rage in southern Nevada for similar services. Currently, CCSN has a waiting list of approximately one and one-half years for its independent living program. CCSN feels BSBVI is better equipped to provide services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired. BSBVI has trained professional staff that can provide the needed services to improve the quality of life for consumers. Although, it is understood that BSBVI is a vocationally motivated program and can only provide services to individuals under 55 who are seeking employment. The CCSN delay in providing services, particularly mobility cane training, regrettably, results in consumers having to “get by” by attempting to navigate city streets on their own, potentially putting them and/or others at-risk, relying on friends or family members, or not venturing out; all outcomes that result in the lack of independence for consumers when they are learning to adapt to their new life challenges.
- ❖ Suggested that a smart phone recycling program could be of value to individuals who are blind or visually impaired because they are good screen reading devices and have a variety of apps that can improve the quality of life.
- ❖ How do we better educate end users regarding the access availability through smart technology (i.e., iPad, iPhone, etc.)?
- ❖ The Mobility Technology Workshop (formerly the IOS Academy) is held at Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living each Thursday from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. to educate consumers on how to use apps and features of smart devices.
- ❖ Free AT devices are difficult to obtain when an employment objective is not the intended outcome.
- ❖ Eyeglasses, while important, are not the priority for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. This having been said, the attendees felt that the expansion of an eyeglass recycling program would be of value to low-income seniors. A consumer from Lyon County indicated that he needed help with special eyeglasses for his optic neuritis; costs for such eyeglasses run \$400 to \$500. Although Lions Club has a robust eyeglass recycling program, more often than not, the collected eyeglasses are shipped overseas. Rather than focusing on eyeglasses, the consumers reported that the focus should be on AT devices and training for individuals who are blind or visually impaired because this priority will improve their overall quality of life.

- ❖ Schools are not teaching Braille.
- ❖ Waiting until the age of 55 to learn Braille impacts the ability for individuals who are blind or visually impaired who fall within the “gap population” to adjust to their vision loss and compromises the quality of life they can achieve.
- ❖ Braille is the “blind person’s equivalent to the printed word” and the primary method by which he/she learns to read. Learning Braille should never be placed “on-hold” because a consumer falls within the “gap population”.
- ❖ Optical character recognition is an excellent accommodation; however, the cost is beyond the reach of many consumers.
 - For example, the Freedom Scientific Open Book is costly: \$1,200 for the software and \$800 for the scanner.
 - There are optical character recognition apps available on the Apple and Android platforms for a fraction of the cost.
- ❖ Information regarding assistive technology devices has been limited because of the cost to educate/inform the consumer about the range of devices/services available.
- ❖ Good, up-to-date information needs to be available to consumers, advocates, educational institutions, family members, etc. It is challenging to keep information current because technology is ever-changing in the industry. On the one hand, this is positive because better devices continue to improve the quality of life; yet, to keep information current and to conduct effective outreach service providers are forever pursuing a “moving target”. This makes it difficult for service providers to provide the most current AT device and up-to-date training because they are constantly re-training.
- ❖ Training is consistently underfunded because it is not understood by policy makers.
- ❖ Consumers reported that they have been discouraged to learn Braille.
- ❖ “Smart” devices are changing the landscape; smart devices are the means by which individuals who are blind or visually impaired are able to access the “Modern Life Highway”.
- ❖ Universal access needs to be patterned after what was previously available with telephone land lines.
- ❖ Students need to be able to take home AT devices.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

American Legion, Nevada State Department of Employment, Training & Rehabilitation, and Clark County Conference Call, Town Hall Meetings, Las Vegas, Nevada

- ❖ Inadequate training is available for AT devices.
- ❖ AT training is currently limited to 30 days; no on-going training is available.
- ❖ Consumers are unfamiliar with the agencies and/or organizations that can provide AT devices and how to connect with them.
- ❖ Consumers reported problems with obtaining funding to purchase an AT device unless they could demonstrate a vocational objective.

- ❖ While programs are available, the blind and visually impaired community may not be aware of the programs and how to use them.
- ❖ Blind Connect refers individuals who are blind or visually impaired to the resources it knows about; admittedly, it does not know all the resources that are available. It is difficult to obtain information in a timely manner and to distribute it to the affected community.
- ❖ A lack of information persists – both in printed and electronic mediums – and, regrettably, websites are often not accessible.
- ❖ A lot of websites are not accessible. There are things “in the works”, such as “Sight Ques”, being developed by A Eye Squared, that allows for magnification and speech from any website.
- ❖ An extreme need exists for accessible websites. Agencies and organizations need to be held accountable for the accessibility of their websites. If consumers are encouraged to access services using websites then it is imperative that these same websites are accessible. Continual feedback is needed to maintain accessibility of any website.
- ❖ It is difficult for consumers to apply for services when local, state and federal websites are not accessible. It was reported that State service websites are not accessible to screen readers and magnifiers. The State was encouraged to invest funding to ensure the accessibility of its agency websites.
- ❖ It was suggested that nonprofit agencies collaborate with public sector agencies to create accessible websites; leaders from State agencies, along with nonprofit organizations, need to step-up to contribute to accessible websites and to ensure that content is up-to-date.
- ❖ Federal websites often are not accessible, too.
- ❖ An updated brochure listing available resources and how to best access those resources would be beneficial.
- ❖ Individuals who are blind or visually impaired – like anyone else with new technology – need adequate training to maximize their use of AT devices. A person-centered process was recommended. A person needs to learn how to be blind and successful in his/her own home with AT devices before he/she can be successful in the community. It takes time: training should not be capped at the lowest level of service time.

TRANSPORTATION

Nevada Disability Advocacy & Law Center, Elko, Nevada

- ❖ Individuals who are blind or visually impaired have to frequently rely on family members, neighbors, or friends to meet their transportation needs.
- ❖ Some transportation services are unreliable and, as a result, individuals who are blind or visually impaired rely on family members, neighbors, or friends – they always have to have a “back-up” plan.
- ❖ Taxi system does not assist individuals who are blind or visually impaired with getting in and out of a taxi. Discussion followed about a mandated training program for taxi cab

drivers to train them on how to assist individuals with disabilities in getting in and out of taxis and general disability sensitivity training.

- ❖ Advance lead time required for public transportation does not lend itself to last minute appointments, changes in schedules, etc.
- ❖ Several consumers discussed the costs associated with traveling to appointments with specialists outside of the area. The delay in reimbursement for gas from BVR/BSBVI or other agencies poses a hardship for some.
- ❖ A mobility management program is coming to Elko through RSVP, contact is Mike Reynolds. Jeff Duncan with the Aging and Disability Services Division (ADSD) will obtain more information about the mobility management program and report back to the group in the afternoon session regarding the Elko Mobility Management Initiative.
 - Jeff Duncan with ADSD reported back to the group about this initiative:
 - Grantee is RSVP
 - Connects existing transportation services, does not create new services
 - Projected roll-out date is in the next “couple of months”
- ❖ Individuals who are blind or visually impaired would be able to volunteer their time if transportation was more available and more reliable. Public transportation is only available from 6:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday - Friday. These hours limit one’s ability to volunteer, attend community events, return home from work, or work alternative schedules, etc.
- ❖ Youth who are transitioning from high school to work are challenged to find transportation that can accommodate their work schedules. When youth find a job they may not be able to get to their workplaces because of lack of transportation.
- ❖ The Community Health Advocate in Wells commented that one of the major resources she provides to tribal members is transportation to and from appointments. Limited resources are available in Wells when the sole provider is not available.
- ❖ Only four cabs service Elko and neighboring areas - \$25 one-way trip to Spring Creek; \$40 one-way trip to Carlin.
- ❖ Public transportation frequently runs five to ten minutes behind schedule; users plan their trips accordingly.
- ❖ Same day service has provided all people with disabilities greater flexibility in their daily schedules.
- ❖ Buses are typically full to capacity; no fixed route buses as in other areas. Fixed route buses would expand transportation options.
- ❖ Winnemucca has no bus transportation.
- ❖ Ely has limited bus transportation.
- ❖ No transportation issues cited with transporting students with disabilities to and from school.

- ❖ Overriding theme is that transportation is a major issue for all residents in rural Nevada but particularly more challenging for individuals with disabilities and, even more so, for those who are blind or visually impaired.
- ❖ Transportation at night is challenging because the bus service stops at 4:00 p.m. Unrealistic for those holding a 9-5 job, or working 3rd or 4th shifts.
- ❖ Rely on friends, family, neighbors, and, sometimes, the taxi service.
- ❖ Call-in service – Get My Ride – is a valued service.
- ❖ Would like to attend community events after dark but am unable to do so because of the 4:00 p.m. ending time of the bus service. Unfairly limits the ability of the disabled community to participate in civic events.
- ❖ Would like to attend government meetings; again, they are held in the evening hours.

TRANSPORTATION

Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living, Sparks, Nevada

- ❖ No bus system is available in Pahrump.
- ❖ Bus drivers do not consistently announce bus stops. When asked, some bus drivers will announce the bus stop but not all bus drivers are willing to comply with such requests. Sometimes bus stops are announced too late to afford the necessary time for an individual with a disability to disembark at the stop and, if he/she stops at the next stop, it can result in the consumer becoming lost. Some consumers shared stories of becoming disoriented, lost, and fearful as a result of disembarking at the wrong bus stop. The automated system that announces bus stops does not always work; furthermore, it can be manually turned off by the bus driver. If subsequently turned on, the automated system does not accurately announce the bus stops.
- ❖ Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) needs to hold drivers accountable:
 - Sensitivity training
 - Service animal policy
 - Provide training on how to serve the needs of individuals who are blind or visually impaired.
 - Is certification required? What are the licensing requirements for bus drivers?
 - Emphasis now is primarily on safety.
- ❖ The fares for RTC Access rides are considerable for individuals with disabilities living on fixed incomes: costs are \$3.00 for a one-way fare and \$6.00 for a round trip fare.
- ❖ Taxi companies need to provide sensitivity training to their drivers.
- ❖ RTC website is not accessible to individuals who are blind or visually impaired.
- ❖ Consumers reported long travel times; it took upwards of two and one-half hours on a RTC Ride for a trip that would only take 10 minutes on RTC Access.
- ❖ Urged to expand bus service from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. to provide individuals who are blind or visually impaired with the same or similar opportunities to participate in more activities of daily living: government meetings, theater performances, work schedule

flexibility, etc. Typically, consumers can rely upon public transportation to transport them to an event; yet, they report that they must find an alternative transportation mode for the return trip because of the limited bus schedules.

- ❖ Sidewalks are in “shambles” in the city of Reno.
- ❖ A consumer reported using casino airport shuttles to travel to the Reno Tahoe International Airport when other forms of bus service were not available.
- ❖ Consumers reported that the five day advance notice requirement to use Logisticare, the transportation bus service provided by Medicaid, is unreasonable. It was pointed out that in an emergency this notice requirement can be waived. Expanded access to Logisticare would enable consumers to make and/or keep appointments outside of the area. At the present time only those who are on full Medicaid are eligible to use Logisticare services.
- ❖ Taxi service is limited in rural Nevada.
- ❖ Douglas Area Rural Transportation (DART) does not go to Carson City.
- ❖ Urged to link bus routes between jurisdictions so bus service is seamless. Consumers reported challenges in getting to bus stops. Also, bus drivers do not always announce upcoming bus stops.
- ❖ The growth of the Truckee Meadows Community College campus has resulted in a confusing numbering system for the bus stops on its main campus. Students reported that they did not always know where they were to be picked up on the main campus.
- ❖ The geographical area serviced by RTC Access, the paratransit system, should be expanded to include the outlying areas. The non-ADA service area includes a pent-up demand for transportation services from individuals with disabilities.
- ❖ A commuter network was recommended to include rail and bus, similar to that found in larger urban areas.
- ❖ In Lyon County the paratransit system travels to Carson City and Reno only one day every other month. This schedule limits the access of consumers to specialists who are not available within these narrow time frames.
- ❖ Bus transportation routes are inadequate to accommodate the transportation needs of consumers.
 - Douglas Area Rural Transportation (DART) is only available Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. And, importantly, access is even limited during scheduled service hours.
 - Caregivers are not allowed to transport their clients because of liability concerns.
- ❖ Attendance at public hearings held by RTC was strongly encouraged to influence future decision making regarding the RTC Paratransit Plan.

TRANSPORTATION

American Legion, Nevada State Department of Employment, Training & Rehabilitation, and Clark County Conference Call, Town Hall Meetings, Las Vegas, Nevada

- ❖ Insufficient audio count at street intersections; audio count does not allow sufficient time to afford individuals with disabilities an opportunity to safely cross intersections.
- ❖ Drivers are unaware of the need to use additional caution when encountering pedestrians who are blind or visually impaired.
- ❖ A comment was made that there was “no paratransit available in Reno, NV”. (Note: This statement is incorrect; whether the paratransit coverage area should be expanded is a separate question.)
- ❖ Blind Connect reported that a consumer was unable to obtain O&M Training because he wasn’t able to return to work; however, he was able to obtain assistance from the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) to learn how to use the bus service and to navigate the bus routes.
- ❖ Silver Rider has increased rides and is branching out in order to expand its service area.
- ❖ Concerns persist regarding the paratransit systems limited service area.
- ❖ No bus services are available in the Blue Diamond area.

LIFE SKILLS

Nevada Disability Advocacy & Law Center, Elko, Nevada

- ❖ Lack of occupational therapists and other professionals in rural Nevada poses challenges to individuals who are blind or visually impaired. It was noted that shortages exist elsewhere across the country, too.
- ❖ No supports, other than Social Security when eligible, are available for the “older” population in their 30s and 40s who do not choose to return to work and have a visual impairment. Individuals with visual impairments who are older than 22 and younger than 55 are only eligible to receive BSBVI services if they are actively pursuing employment. Older Blind services are available for individuals who are blind or visually impaired at the age of 55 or older. Bridge services are needed for this growing “gap” population of individuals between the ages of 22 and 55 who are not vocationally motivated, yet require assistance for independent living.
- ❖ Need to educate the doctors and other attending professionals about the services available through BVR/BSBVI.
- ❖ PACE coalition is a good resource in Elko and rural Nevada.
- ❖ Regional planning group meets quarterly to share information about resources; this group has been key to promoting awareness of the services available.
- ❖ Care-giver “back-up” plans:
 - Always in the back of their minds, if “so and so” cannot help, who can?
 - Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living frequently receives calls inquiring about resources for “back-up” care and respite care.

- Not enough caregivers to meet the growing needs. People have increased employment options in the improved economy. Pay is not commensurate with the job responsibilities for caregivers; hence, they have sought better paying jobs with the improved economic environment.
- ❖ Aging and Disability Resource Center is located in the Wells Fargo Bank in Elko and serves rural Nevada. Ivan Espinoza manages this program.
- ❖ Adaptive bowling, accessible playgrounds, and adaptive swimming classes are available.
- ❖ The Special Olympics program is available.
- ❖ Cell phone discounts for individuals with disabilities are not recognized by the local cell phone providers.
- ❖ Recommendation was made to explore partnership agreements with cell providers to make the discounted service available to individuals with disabilities.
- ❖ Support groups for individuals with disabilities are limited.
- ❖ Recommendation made to identify a support group coordinator to plan, organize and oversee support group initiatives in rural Nevada.
- ❖ A gap in services exists for those with different economic resources.
- ❖ No formal life skills training available for those in the “gap ages of 22-55”

LIFE SKILLS

Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living, Sparks, Nevada

- ❖ Apps are available to assist individuals who are blind or visually impaired with how to navigate kitchen environments to perform daily food preparation tasks. Some consumers reported that they taught themselves ways to manage food preparation tasks. Puff paint applications were recommended on stove tops to indicate where the knobs were set in the on/off position or at a certain temperature.
- ❖ Barriers include sidewalks, shrubs, garbage cans, telephone poles, tree roots, etc.; such obstacles are frequently encountered on paths of travel.
- ❖ Methods were suggested on how to organize home or work areas to facilitate identification, ease of use, and increase safety and productivity.
- ❖ Consumers reported difficulties opening and reading their correspondence; some relied on neighbors and family members. Apps are available to assist with these tasks.

LIFE SKILLS

American Legion, Nevada State Department of Employment, Training & Rehabilitation, and Clark County Conference Call, Town Hall Meetings, Las Vegas, Nevada

- ❖ A companion program was suggested for homebound persons who are blind or visually impaired.
- ❖ Need to develop a peer to peer mentoring program.

- ❖ A large need exists for life skills training to help individuals who are blind or visually impaired to become successful in life – a more systemic approach is needed, including more teachers to provide life skills instruction.
- ❖ One has to “learn (how) to be blind – home skills, cooking skills, shopping skills, Braille and O&M Training – then after all that – you have to feel comfortable before you can think of anything past daily survival.
- ❖ Peer to peer training needs to be developed to provide life skills and O&M Training because such training is only available through the BSBVI if the individual who is blind or visually impaired is seeking a vocational outcome.
- ❖ Life skills training for the home setting is needed for individuals who are blind or visually impaired that fall within the “gap years” in Las Vegas.
- ❖ BSBVI begins working with students in their junior year in high school to provide life skills training.

EDUCATION

Nevada Disability Advocacy & Law Center, Elko, Nevada

- ❖ A parent commented that she chose not to pursue BVR/BSBVI services for her child with vision impairment because she was told BVR/BSBVI could only assist with a Bachelor’s degree; thereafter, a student is expected to pursue employment. Her child’s career goal was to become a history teacher/professor requiring a Ph.D. A discussion followed that BVR/BSBVI can, in fact, provide extended services to support a student with a career goal requiring graduate degrees and that this individual was unfortunately misinformed.
- ❖ Clear communication is needed to ensure BVR/BSBVI clients are informed of their options through BVR/BSBVI.

EDUCATION

Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living, Sparks, Nevada

- ❖ On-line classes through UNR are not accessible.
 - Student was informed that she needed to purchase a laptop with Blackboard Mobile in order to take on-line classes.
 - Student was informed that because of the delay in obtaining the needed AT she could take an incomplete and re-take the class.
 - She asked, “Why cannot I be like my classmates?”
- ❖ AT devices do not follow the students; schools need to adapt, not the students.
- ❖ The Teach Act HR 3505 is a bill before the House of Representatives that would standardize college curriculum. The pros and cons of this bill were discussed at length. Professors do not support this legislation because it would curtail their academic freedoms. Individuals with disabilities think this legislation would help them with their college studies because more curricula would be available in accessible formats.

EDUCATION

American Legion, Nevada State Department of Employment, Training & Rehabilitation, and Clark County Conference Call, Town Hall Meetings, Las Vegas, Nevada

- ❖ A parent of a student voiced her concern that there are no schools for students who are blind in Nevada. The parent did not feel her son was receiving an appropriate level of instruction in the regular school because his teacher had not been trained on how to instruct a student who is blind. The parent further commented that the school did not provide the appropriate AT devices; nor did it have appropriate signage posted in the parking area warning drivers that a blind student attended the school.

EMPLOYMENT

American Legion, Nevada State Department of Employment, Training & Rehabilitation, and Clark County Conference Call, Town Hall Meetings, Las Vegas, Nevada

- ❖ Job developers need to be trained regarding issues that persons who are blind or visually impaired encounter in the workplace.
- ❖ More job coaches are needed to provide supports for persons who are blind or visually impaired.
- ❖ Employers need to be informed about the skills and abilities of persons who are blind or visually impaired and how to accommodate them to enable them to successfully perform their job functions.
- ❖ Need to educate the public and employers that people are “blind not broken”.
- ❖ The approach needs to be one of a “positive, can do attitude” – to bring about change.
- ❖ Need to educate employers about “blind hires”.

Note: The Las Vegas Town Hall Meetings were the only meetings in which employment issues were discussed.

CONSUMER SERVICE OUTREACH: Promoting awareness and knowledge of consumer services available

Nevada Disability Advocacy & Law Center, Elko, Nevada

- ❖ Several persons were not aware of available resources.
- ❖ No matter what outreach methods are used, you cannot reach everyone.
- ❖ Service outreach at Owyhee resulted in eight to ten new clients.
- ❖ Senior Center Newsletter, local newspapers, and PSAs were suggested as good mediums by which to reach consumers.

CONSUMER SERVICE OUTREACH: Promoting awareness and knowledge of consumer services available

Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living, Sparks, Nevada

- ❖ Consumers need to be informed of the resources available.
- ❖ A resource directory of services, assistive technology devices, etc. is desired.
- ❖ The Silver Standard is a newsletter that is published by Douglas County Senior Services. The newsletter welcomes articles, notices of activities or events, etc. To submit an article contacts the editor at: editor@gmail.com.
- ❖ National Federation of the Blind offered to assist with translating brochures, booklets, etc. into Braille.

CONSUMER SERVICE OUTREACH: Promoting awareness and knowledge of consumer services available

American Legion, Nevada State Department of Employment, Training & Rehabilitation, and Clark County Conference Call, Town Hall Meetings, Las Vegas, Nevada

- ❖ A community resource guide should be developed in all accessible formats to meet the needs of persons with disabilities, regardless of the nature of their disability.
- ❖ On-going community education and awareness about what it means to be blind or have a visual impairment is needed. Additionally, community education needs to take place to inform others about the skills, abilities, and potential needs of individuals who are blind or visually impaired.
- ❖ State agencies were urged to standardize forms to streamline the benefit application process.
- ❖ Accessible websites, flyers, and other electronic and printed media.
- ❖ Informational networks need to be established to assist with informing affected groups about services, products, upcoming events, new trends, etc.
- ❖ The concept of a “one-stop” comprehensive informational source was strongly encouraged.

MISCELLANEOUS CONCERNS

Nevada Disability Advocacy & Law Center, Elko, Nevada

- ❖ Lack of affordable housing is a challenge for all residents in the area and compounded for individuals with disabilities requiring affordable *as well as* accessible housing because it is not available in Elko.
- ❖ Consumers expressed frustration with the lack of services in the area and the costs associated with traveling to other areas for specialized treatment.
- ❖ Consumers noted not all medical care providers took all types of insurance.
- ❖ The 75 and older demographic is relocating to Nevada, more than any other state; yet, services have not been expanded to meet the needs of this growing demographic.

- ❖ The Lions Club is a resource for assistance with costs associated with cataract surgery.
- ❖ Individuals who have late on-set blindness or visual impairments may not be ready to accept their new limitations. Balancing the desire to remain independent without supports is important to many.

MISCELLANEOUS CONCERNS

Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living, Sparks, Nevada

- ❖ Need for on-going O&M Training.
- ❖ Need funding to create, expand and sustain support groups that focus on the needs and priorities of individuals who are blind or visually impaired.
- ❖ Younger generations do not know what a white cane symbolizes; thereby, creating safety risks for individuals who are blind or visually impaired in navigating sidewalks, crosswalks, etc.
- ❖ Digital controls present unique issues for those who are blind or visually impaired.
- ❖ Desire to see an accessible television developed.
- ❖ Education needed for white cane usage.
- ❖ Universal design remains the ideal.
- ❖ Sensitivity training is needed to provide better customer service to individuals who are blind or visually impaired.
- ❖ Suggested that an easier, more consistent way to navigate websites should be developed.
- ❖ Aisles are too narrow in many shopping venues for individuals who are blind or visually impaired to easily navigate. It was suggested that using a smaller grocery cart is easier for individuals who are blind or visually impaired to navigate narrow store aisles.
- ❖ Product demonstration sites in shopping centers also inhibit the ability of individuals who are blind or visually impaired to navigate store aisles.
- ❖ The small concrete ridge along the outer edge of sidewalks in Japan enhances the ability of individuals who are blind or visually impaired to navigate city sidewalks in Tokyo.
- ❖ Agencies do not “share” information, present options or choices available to consumers; thereby, creating service silos that do not communicate and a service landscape that is difficult for consumers to navigate.
- ❖ State of Nevada needs to fund continuing education units (CEUs) to enable professionals to retain licensure and/or certifications.
- ❖ The need for universal design was stressed.
- ❖ Consumers who are slightly over the income eligibility guidelines for full Medicaid coverage find themselves struggling to make co-payments, cover transportation costs, and other expenses. These expenses have led to additional stress for those with chronic conditions, such as those with MS who have experienced vision loss. The State should make an effort to expand full Medicaid coverage to more individuals who are blind or visually impaired and to other disability populations, too.

State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) for NV 2014-2016

Goal	Objective	Time Frame Start Date	Time Frame End Date	Responsible Entity
1. Support a comprehensive Statewide IL Services Program	1.1 Ensure IL services are provided in accordance with an IL plan	10/1/2013 - IL plan developed for 90% of applicants each year between 10-1 and 9-30	9/30/2016	ADSD
	1.2 Ensure services are provided in the most integrated setting	10/1/2013 - A. 50 Nevadans will be diverted or transitioned from nursing facility care (at least 25 of the 50 will be transitioned). B. 25 Nevadans will receive coordinated services from the Vocational Rehabilitation and Independent Living Services programs	9/30/2016	ADSD - coordinator SILC - monitor
	1.3 Ensure services to underserved populations	10/1/13 - SILS demographics will be measured at the conclusion of each year and, if a target population is not being adequately reached, an outreach plan will be developed to specifically target that population	9/30/2016	ADSD (SILS program)
	1.4 SILC will present compliance progress "report card" to the CSPD	10/1/2013 - SILC member will attend a meeting with the CSPD to discuss Nevada's 2010 Olmstead progress report	9/30/2014 - first report to CSPD, more to follow if necessary	SILC

2. Expand and improve the provision of IL services throughout Nevada	2.1 Provide an appropriate, accessible and affordable network of IL rehab services	10/1/2013 - at least 200 people receive SILS services each FY	9/30/2016	ADSD
	2.2 Coordinate services to older individuals who are blind	10/1/2013 - OBL and SILS program will be jointly serve 15 consumers each FY	9/30/2016	ADSD (cooperative agreement with OBL, VR and SILS)
	2.3 Monitor utilization of, and encourage partners to establish collaborative opportunities and pursue fee based activities with Positive Behavioral Supports (PBS) and similar services so individuals with difficult behaviors will be better able to receive services in their community	10/1/2013 - report the amount of general funds distributed through Aging and Disability Services to PBS. Compile and identify agencies that sought fee based services as well as staff training that provided services to individuals with difficult behaviors. Goal is to maintain the current level of general funds allocated to PBS and establish at least one new provider training and technical assistance project each year.	9/30/2016	SILC (CIL)
3. Support a statewide network of centers for independent living (CILs)	3.1 Explore options to add fee-for-service operations to the menu of CIL services	10/1/2013 - SILC establish work group with at least 1 SILC member and representation from both SNCL and NNCL 9/30/15 - work group provide report	9/30/2014 9/30/2015	SILC (CIL)

	3.2 Explore options to develop a statewide survey on IL services and needs	<u>12/31/2013</u> - SILC will have established a work group comprised with at least 1 SILC member, representation from both SNCL and NNCL, and representation from ADSD <u>3/31/2014</u> - work group will provide report to the SILC of identified surveys and estimated costs for the completion of those surveys <u>6/30/2014</u> - SILC will have explored potential funding opportunities to complete a statewide survey. Plan will be put into place to secure funding if an opportunity can be identified	<u>12/31/2013</u> 3/31/2014 6/30/2014	SILC, NNCL, SNCL, ADSD
4. Support improvement, expansion and coordination of disability services throughout Nevada	4.1 Create opportunities for IL professional to partner with students in the school transition process form EI to school, and school to adult life	9/30/14 - (each FY) SILC will request transition data from relevant agencies for children moving into and out of the school system. The data will be reviewed by the SILC and if appropriate, recommendations made for improved involvement in the transition process	9/30/2014 9/30/2015 9/30/2016	ADSD, VR
	4.2 Expand the availability of community-based training and supports for individuals who are blind or visually impaired	9/30/14 - (each FY) VR will report the number of collaborative Town Hall Meetings and the feedback received from the meetings	9/30/2014 9/30/2016 9/30/2015	VR

	4.3 Monitor implementation and use of the accessible housing database to ensure it is a functional tool	12/31/13 - ADSD report on the housing registry including number of responding properties, overview of the registry and data being collected, and report of issues discovered 6/30/2014 - ADSD report on the housing registry including number of responding properties, overview of the registry and data being collected, and report of issues discovered 9/30/14 - ADSD report on the housing registry including number of responding properties, overview of the registry and data being collected, and report of issues discovered . The data will be reviewed by the SILC, compared to the data from two earlier reports and, if appropriate, recommendations made for improvement.	12/21/2013 6/30/2014 9/30/2014	ADSD
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	4.4 Expand the availability and use of qualified interpreters in medical and legal settings	6/30/2014 - strategic plan for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing will be completed; SILC will participate in stakeholder survey 6/30/2015 - action will be taken on at least two recommendations in the strategic plan	6/30/2014 6/30/2015	ADSD, SILC
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State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) for NV 2014-2016 - AMENDMENT

Goal	Objective	Time Frame Start Date	Time Frame End Date	Responsible Entity
A. Support a comprehensive Statewide IL Services Program	A.1 Each year, at least 90% of those applying for services will have an Independent Living plan.	10/1/2013 - IL plan developed for 90% of applicants each year between 10-1 and 9-30	September 2014, 2015, 2016	ADSD
	A.2 Services for people with disabilities are provided in the most integrated setting.	10/1/2013 - A. 50 Nevadans will be diverted or transitioned from nursing facility care (at least 25 of the 50 will be transitioned). B. 25 Nevadans will receive coordinated services from the Vocational Rehabilitation and Independent Living Services programs	September 2014, 2015, 2016	ADSD - coordinator SILC - monitor
	A.3 Provide targeted outreach to underserved populations.	10/1/13 - SILS demographics will be measured at the conclusion of each year and, if a target population is not being adequately reached, an outreach plan will be developed to specifically target that population	September 2014, 2015, 2016	ADSD (SILS program)
B. Expand and improve the provision of IL services throughout Nevada	B.1 Eliminate the waitlist for IL services by the end of state fiscal year (SFY) 2016.	10/1/2014 - SILC support ADSD to secure the necessary State resources.	9/30/2016	ADSD
	B.2 Coordinate services to older individuals who are blind	10/1/2013 - OBIL and SILS program will be jointly serve 15 consumers each FY	September 2014, 2015, 2016	ADSD (cooperative agreement with OBIL, VR and SILS)

C. Support a statewide network of centers for independent living (CILs)	C.1 Establish collaborative opportunities and pursue fee-based activities with Positive Behavioral Supports (PBS)	10/1/2013 - SILC supports ADSD to monitor throughout each year and report the amount of general funds distributed through ADSD to PBS.	September 2014, 2015, 2016	SILC (CIL)
	C.2 Identify and collaborate with communities and stakeholders to raise awareness of CIL services and determine ways services can be funded and implemented to be responsive to community needs.	SILC and CILs will research other states to identify best practices used by successful CILs and determine if they can be adapted to raise awareness and garner community level support.	September 2015 & 2016	SILC, CILs
	C.3 Work with communities and stakeholders to explore ways to expand future CIL services.		September 2015 & 2016	
	C.4 Explore options and develop a statewide survey on IL services and IL needs.	SILC to explore other surveys completed by other SILCs and CILs.	8/1/15, 11/30/15	
D. Support improvement, expansion and coordination of disability services throughout Nevada	D.1 Coordinate the transition of youth with disabilities from school to adult life	9/30/14 - (each FY) SILC and DSU work with relevant stakeholders to improve the continuum of services for children with disabilities to coordinate resources during transitional phases, and ensure IL service agencies are an involved partner.	September 2014, 2015, 2016	SILC & DSU

	D.2 Expand the availability of community-based training and supports for individuals who are blind or visually impaired	SILC will collect information and data and recommend actions to be taken to be responsive to community needs.	9/30/2015	VR
	D.3 Improve the availability and use of qualified interpreters.	Working with the Subcommittee on CSPD, hard of hearing, or speech disabled, ADSD will explore opportunities for the expansion of resources to facilitate the communication needs of Deaf individuals in medical and legal settings, and when a Certified Deaf Interpreter is needed.	6/30/2015 9/30/2015	ADSD